

applications for all Afghan nationals including those of Indian origin are being considered on a case by case basis.

(b) In a press conference on 28th May, 2001, External Affairs Minister had said that all those who do not subscribe to the idea of Taliban and leave Afghanistan and ask India for temporary shelter would be provided with a shelter.

(c) to (c) As in all cases, Government's policies are formulated keeping in mind the views expressed in Parliament.

Indo-Iranian Talks

1272. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the talks held between the Prime Minister and the Iranian dignitaries and the agreements/protocols signed by the Indian and Iranian authorities during the Prime Minister's visit to Iran in April, 2001;

(b) whether the visit talks and the agreements/protocol pacts signed in Iran during the aforesaid visit would strengthen mutual economic and political relations between the two countries; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) Prime Minister paid an official visit to Iran, a country with which India shares deep historical ties and civilisational and cultural affinities, from 10-13 April, 2001. During Prime Minister's visit both sides discussed issues relating to cooperation on bilateral, regional and international matters. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to the strengthening and deepening of consultations and to enhancing coordination on bilateral, regional and multilateral issues of mutual

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concern. Prime Minister and President Khatami emphasised the need to enhance trade ties, economic and technical cooperation and cultural contacts.

Prime Minister and President Khatami of Iran signed the 'Tehran Declaration', which embodies their vision of cooperation based on shared concerns, common aspirations and shared complementarities for the benefit of the two peoples and of the region and world at large. In addition, agreements on (i) Trade and Economic Cooperation and (ii) Customs Cooperation and MOUs on (iii) Information Technology (iv) Cooperation in the field of Energy (v) Cooperation in the field of Power (conventional and non-conventional sources) and (vi) Technical Cooperation were also signed.

In order to encourage trade and economic cooperation between India and Iran, Prime Minister expressed India's willingness offer a line of credit of US\$ 200 million particularly for infrastructure projects in Iran on terms and conditions to be mutually decided upon.

(b) and (c) India and Iran have historical ties of friendship and cooperation and Prime Minister's recent visit to Iran has opened a new chapter in our bilateral relations. Prime Minister's interaction with the Iranian leadership witnessed a reiteration of a mutual desire to build on civilisational affinities and cultural commonalities, impart commercial, economic and technological depth to the relationship, pursue the continuing dialogue at official level and political levels on regional and international issues. The agreements and MOUs signed during the visit will establish a structural framework for boosting trade and economic cooperation between the two countries.